

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows. This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1-9. (Cancelled)

10. (Original) A system comprising:

an encoder to provide a variable bit rate (VBR) representation of an image sequence, the VBR representation comprising a plurality of blocks of information; and
a processor to determine a plurality of time intervals T_p within the VBR representation in which a number of blocks of information per unit time is greater than a baseline value, to determine a plurality of time intervals T_n within the VBR representation in which a number of blocks of information per unit time is less than the baseline value, and to create a second representation of the image sequence in which some blocks of information B_p are removed from the time intervals T_p and interlaced with blocks of information B_n in the time intervals T_n to reduce a variation in a number of blocks of information per unit time between the time intervals T_p and T_n .

11. (Original) The system of claim 10 wherein the number of blocks of information per unit time in the second representation is about equal to the baseline value in the time intervals T_p and T_n .

12. (Original) The system of claim 10 wherein the processor is further to determine a bit rate for encoding the image sequence to the VBR representation which produces a desired information content of the second representation and constrains a maximum bit rate of the second representation to be less than or equal to a predetermined value.

13. (Original) The system of claim 10 wherein the processor is further to determine a bit rate for encoding the image sequence to the VBR representation which substantially maximizes a desired information content of the second representation and constrains a maximum bit rate of the second representation to be less than or equal to a predetermined value.

14. (Original) The system of claim 10 wherein the processor is to populate a header in the second representation with data indicating the time intervals T_n .
15. (Original) The system of claim 10 further comprising a transmitter to stream the second representation of the image sequence via a communication network.
16. (Original) The system of claim 15 further comprising:
a receiver to receive the second representation of the image sequence via the communication network;
a buffer; and
a second processor responsive to the receiver to reconstruct frames of the image sequence concurrently with the second representation being received;
wherein during the time intervals T_n , the second processor is to reconstruct frames of the image sequence based on blocks of information B_n received about in real time, and to store the blocks of information B_p in the buffer, and
wherein during the time intervals T_p , the second processor is to reconstruct frames of the image sequence based on the blocks of information B_p stored in the buffer and blocks of information received about in real time.

17. (Currently Amended) A system for reconstructing an image sequence originally encoded in a variable bit rate (VBR) representation, the VBR representation comprising a plurality of blocks of information, the VBR representation defining a plurality of time intervals T_p in which a number of blocks of information per unit time is greater than a baseline value and a plurality of time intervals T_n in which a number of blocks of information per unit time is less than the baseline value, the system comprising:

a receiver to receive a second representation of the image sequence via the communication network, the second representation comprising a header with data indicating time intervals T_n ;

a buffer; and

a processor responsive to the receiver to extract the data indicating the time intervals T_n from the header, and to reconstruct frames of the image sequence concurrently with the second representation being received, the reconstruction based on the data indicating the time intervals T_n ;

wherein during the time intervals T_n , the processor is to reconstruct frames of the image sequence based on blocks of information B_n received about in real time, and to store the blocks of information B_p in the buffer; and

wherein during the time intervals T_p , the processor is to reconstruct frames of the image sequence based on the blocks of information B_p stored in the buffer and blocks of information received about in real time.

18. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 17 wherein the number of blocks of information per unit time in the second representation is about equal to the baseline value in the time intervals T_p and T_n .

19. (Cancelled).